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Marlene Dortch
Secretary, Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20554

July 21, 2011

Dear Commissioners:

This letter is in reference to AT&T's proposal to merge with T-Mobile, which is under review. I am pleased to have the opportunity to share my comments with you.

The outcome of this merger promises to be an enhanced, faster, and more reliable network for many rural areas. As County Commissioner for Lancaster County, Nebraska, I represent the capitol city of Lincoln, as well as several rural, largely agriculturally-based communities. For the farm families I represent, affordable access to high-speed broadband could be the key to improving the economy and quality of life for their families.

A strong agricultural foundation fuels our state's economy. In fact, agriculture is responsible for one-in-three jobs in Nebraska. In order to compete, thrive, and succeed in the 21st century economy, our rural families and businesses must have access to high-speed broadband.

High-speed broadband means that rural schools will have access to the educational opportunities children in more populated areas already have. It means the University of Nebraska can offer more opportunities throughout the state. It means small businesses can improve their economic position through web-based marketing and sales. It means rural businesses and producers will be able to use resources to help them be more successful in their work.

The availability of high-speed wireless access has the potential to solidify the entire state's economic recovery by helping rural families, producers, and small businesses to expand and thrive. This merger is an important development in bringing opportunity to communities, like those in Lancaster County, Nebraska, throughout the state and the country, and I hope you will support it. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Brent Smoyer
Lancaster County Commissioner

CC: Chairman Julius Genachowski
Commissioner Michael Copps
Commissioner Robert McDowell
Commissioner Mignon Clyburn